

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-14 are pending in the application.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's allowance of claims 5-8 and 12-14.

Claims 1-4 and 9-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0056490 to Nagami et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Examiner asserted that the claimed feature of the shortcut controller autonomously caching outgoing route data for the input cell is disclosed in Nagami et al. at step S11 of Fig. 7 and at paragraphs 174, 185, and 187. The Examiner also asserted that Nagami et al. disclose an alternative embodiment that does not require an Address Resolution Protocol (ARP) to be performed, and therefore the data may be cached autonomously. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that the operation illustrated in Fig. 7 of Nagami et al. fails to meet the caching features of the claimed invention. The Examiner asserted that steps S8 to S13 disclose these features, but the timing requirement of the claim that the caching is performed *after the input signal returns through the connection path* does not appear to be met by Nagami et al. The operation of "update default VC table" in S11 of Fig. 7 in Nagami et al. is performed only when neither a dedicated VC table search (S9) nor a default VC table search (S10) yields an entry, and it is performed prior to transmission step S13. The Examiner noted that "ARP is not performed so that the data is cached autonomously – para 172, lines 1-4 and last nine lines; para. 173)." Page 3, lines 7-8 of the Office Action. The cited portions of Nagami et al. do not, however, describe any data being cached autonomously. Indeed, such portions merely describe proceeding to step S12, where L3 packet is converted into L2 frame for transmission. There is no explanation in the

cited portions of Nagami et al. that "ARP is not performed so that the data is cached autonomously," as alleged by the Examiner. Steps S9 and S10 proceed directly to step S12 when a VC table entry is found and there is no description in the cited portions of Nagami et al. directed to autonomous caching.

Thus, the cited portions of Nagami et al. only describe proceeding to packet conversion and transmission when a VC table entry is found, and creating a default VC table entry using ARP before transmission when such an entry is not found in either the dedicated VC table or the default VC table. Please see, e.g., the last three lines, respectively, of paragraphs [0172] & [0173], and paragraph [0174] of Nagami et al.

Therefore, Nagami et al., as cited and relied upon by the Examiner, fail to disclose,

"A cell signal switching apparatus for switching and transferring a cell signal among first and second nodes and an external routing device, the nodes having each an interface for the cell signal, the routing device having an interface for the cell signal and determining an outgoing route for the cell signal according to destination data contained in the cell signal, the cell signal being made from a packet signal that contains the destination data, the cell signal switching apparatus comprising:

a switch for making a connection path among the nodes and having a predetermined connection path fixedly or semi-fixedly connected to the routing device;

a memory for storing cached outgoing route data transmitted from the routing device through the predetermined connection path; and

a shortcut controller for forming a shortcut to transmit the cell signal directly from the first node to the second node without routing by the routing device when outgoing route data contained in an input cell signal from the first node is equal to outgoing route data cached in the memory, and otherwise autonomously caching outgoing route data for the input cell into the memory after the input cell signal from the first node has been transmitted to the routing device through the predetermined connection path, and returned therefrom through the predetermined connection path after the routing device has determined the outgoing route data," as recited in claim 1. (Emphasis added)

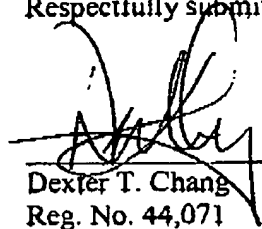
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, together with claims 2-4 dependent therefrom, is patentable over Nagami et al. for at least the above-stated reasons. Claim 9 includes features that correspond to those of claim 1 cited above and is, therefore, together with claims 10-11 dependent therefrom, patentable over Nagami et al. for at least the same reasons.

The above statements on the disclosure in the cited reference represent the present opinions of the undersigned attorney. The Examiner is respectfully requested to specifically indicate those portions of the reference that provide the basis for a view contrary to any of the above-stated opinions.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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